

REMARKS

The present communication is responsive to the Official Action mailed on March 11, 2004 (Paper No. 17), finally rejecting all the pending claims in the application, namely, claims 1-15 and 18-20,. A one-month extension of the time to reply, up to and including July 11, 2004, is mailed concurrently herewith.

Claims 1-15 and 18-20 remain pending in the application. Of the pending claims, claims 1, 4 and 18 are independent claims. All the other pending claims depend from either claim 1 or claim 18.

Applicants have amended claim 1 to now recite "a segmenting-range setting unit coupled to said level segmenting unit for calibrating a range associated with the plurality of levels into which the analog signal is segmented by said level segmenting unit, the range changing in response to the pressing operation of said controller." Support for the amendments to claim 1 may be found by reference to, for example, page 16 of the specification. Therefore, applicants respectfully submit that the amendments to claim 1 do not constitute the addition of new matter.

Claim 4 has been amended to now recite "a segmenting-range setting unit for calibrating the range over which said level segmenting unit segments the analog output signal into one of the plurality of levels in response to the pressing operation." Support for this amendment may be found by reference to, for example, pages 16 and 37-38 of the specification. Accordingly, applicants respectfully submit that the amendments to claim 4 do not constitute the addition of new matter.

Claim 18 has been amended to now recite "calibrating the range in response to the load exerted on the pressure sensitive device; and segmenting the detected analog signal into a

plurality of signal levels within the calibrated range, whereby the signal output of the control apparatus is adjusted." Support for the amendments to claim 18 may be found by reference to, for example, pages 16 and 37-38 of the specification. As such, applicants respectfully submit that the amendments to claim 18 do not constitute the addition of new matter.

In the Official Action of March 11, 2004, the Examiner rejected the claims on the same basis as set forth in the Official Action of September 9, 2003 (Paper No. 15). The Examiner rejected claims 1 and 7-9 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 5,485,171 to *Copper* et al. (hereinafter "*Copper*"). Claim 4 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over *Copper* in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,208,271 to *Armstrong* (hereinafter "*Armstrong*"). Claims 2, 3, 5, 6, 10-15, 19 and 20 were also rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over *Copper* as applied to claims 1 and 18 and further in view of *Armstrong*. Claim 18 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102 as being anticipated by *Copper*.

In addition, the Examiner responded to applicants' arguments set forth in the amendment filed on December 18, 2003 (Paper No. 16). In relevant part, the Examiner responded to applicants' arguments by stating that the "fact that there is no disclosure that the range determined by the circuit parameters changes in response to the pressure applied to the transducer is irrelevant being that it is not claimed." (Paper No. 17, pg. 12.)

Applicants respectfully submit that in view of the present amendments to claims 1, 4 and 18 and the Examiner's response to applicant's argument, the Examiner's grounds for rejecting the claims is now moot. In particular, none of the references cited by the Examiner disclose or suggest "a segmenting-range setting unit coupled to said level segmenting unit for calibrating a

range associated with the plurality of levels into which the analog signal is segmented by said level segmenting unit, the range changing in response to the pressing operation of said controller" as is recited in claim 1. The references cited by the Examiner also do not disclose or suggest, either individually or in combination, "a segmenting-range setting unit for calibrating the range over which said level segmenting unit segments the analog output signal into one of the plurality of levels in response to the pressing operation" as is recited in claim 4. In addition, none of the references cited by the Examiner disclose or suggest "calibrating the range in response to the load exerted on the pressure sensitive device" as is now recited in claim 18. Indeed, applicants respectfully submit that the *Copper* reference is clear in disclosing that the voltage levels of the disclosed transducer are predetermined by circuit parameters. (*Copper*, col. 9, ln. 59-col. 10, ln. 2.) As such, *Copper* contains absolutely no disclosure that the range determined by the circuit parameters changes in response to pressure applied to the transducer. The *Armstrong* reference does not make up for this deficiency in the *Copper* reference. Therefore, the references cannot be combined in any manner to obviate the claims as amended.

Because claims 2, 3, 5-15 and 19-20 depend from either claim 1 or claim 18, applicants respectfully submit that these claims are allowable for at least the reasons stated above.

As it is believed that all of the rejections set forth in the Official Action have been fully met, favorable reconsideration and allowance are earnestly solicited. If, however, for any reason the Examiner does not believe that such action can be taken at this time, it is respectfully requested that he/she telephone applicant's attorney at (908) 654-5000 in order to overcome any additional objections which he might have.

If there are any additional charges in connection with this requested amendment, the Examiner is authorized to charge Deposit Account No. 12-1095 therefor.

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Respectfully Submitted,

By 

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